

**TESTIMONY OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE  
BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND  
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE**

**NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST L. D. 1264**

**“AN ACT ALLOWING THE HARVEST OF YELLOW PERCH WITH SEINES”**

**SPONSORED BY: Representative KNIGHT of Livermore Falls**

**CO-SPONSORED BY: Representative BEAR of the Houlton Band of Maliseet  
Indians**

**Representative DAVIS of Sangerville**

**Representative DEVIN of Newcastle**

**Representative DILL of Old Town**

**Representative JACKSON of Oxford**

**Representative KENT of Woolwich**

**Representative MARKS of Pittston**

**Representative SHAW of Standish**

**Senator THOMAS of Somerset**

**DATE OF HEARING: May 3, 2013**

Good afternoon Senator Dutremble, Representative Shaw and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Michael Brown, Fisheries Division Director at the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking on behalf of the Department, neither for nor against **L.D. 1264**.

L.D. 1264 will permit licensed fishermen to use seines to target and commercially harvest yellow perch from Maine's lake and ponds.

Historically there have been very few permits issued to harvest yellow perch in Maine. The last request for a commercial harvest permit was 1998. This permit exempts commercial fishermen from existing recreational gear requirements by allowing the use of trap nets and spears in approximately 126 lakes and ponds selected by the department. The permit outlines several conditions, including seasons, gear specifications, areas where gear is prohibited, and disinfectant protocols for gear prior to transporting to another water body.

There are no specifics in this bill that indicate the size, type, or manner in which these commercial seines would be operated. There is concern that the manner in which this gear is fished may injure and kill a number of non-target species. The department will need to establish new, or similar, requirements that would adequately address gear size, location, timing of harvest activities and the waters where harvest would be permitted. The department wants to avoid any impacts to sport fish or forage fish that could end up as bycatch in any commercial seining activity.

I would be glad to answer any questions at this time or during the work session.